

Lorraine is one of the richest homes of German folk songs. The collection of songs made by the German-Lorrainian pastor Ludwig Pinck fills four volumes; and that of fairy stories, legends, and folk tales made by his sister Angelika Merkelbach-Pinck runs into six volumes.

Over this unchanging, almost intact racial basis, history staged its shifting scenes, which finally culminated in the country's changing masters three times in the seventy years since 1870. It would be surprising if this tug of war had had no effect upon the mentality of the inhabitants of Lorraine. The people of this country do not easily say yes or no; they have no liking for the loud or the distinct. They prefer a compromise to a clear decision—an inclination which is supported by the geography of their country, open as it is to all sides (whereas Alsace possesses a well-defined barrier toward the west in the range of the Vosges). No intelligent Lorrainian will deny the danger that this may lead to a sterile cultural twilight. He will also smile at the mention of that dreamland "Lotharingia," the illusion of the rebirth of a buffer state that is neither clearly Germanic nor clearly Romanic, as it existed before the division of Verdun in 843 and continued to exist for a few decades after that. Between 843 and 1943 a lot of things have happened which quickly make any idea of a sovereign individual existence between the two great neighboring nations evaporate into thin air.

The change of masters of 1940, which brought Lorraine back into the Reich, must be looked at against the wide background of the revision of Germany's

western border, which in turn was made possible only by the creation of a firm national unity. The "question of Lorraine" reflects the age-old problem of Germany's western border especially clearly. The spasmodic advance into the territory of Lorraine was never an end in itself for France but always only a stage in her advance toward the middle Rhine. Her postwar struggle for the Saar, the Palatinate, the Rhineland, and the Ruhr which had been initiated by the Versailles solution of 1919 seemed to have brought her within grasp of her centuries-old goal. Since then the Reich has stubbornly and audaciously reconquered one position after another. The coming into being of the new "Westmark" shows this very markedly. The liberation of the Palatinate from French occupation and separatist treason was followed in 1936 by the plebiscite victory in the Saar territory and finally in 1940 by the reconquest of Lorraine. The linking up of Lorraine with its natural hinterland of the east has spared it the fate of an administrative outsider. At the same time, it has facilitated its union with the Reich in a more organic manner than by the hyphen experiment of 1871.

All the essentials are provided for this taciturn, austere, beautiful country attaining rank and voice in the polyphony of Greater Germany. But only a true condition of peace founded on realistic understanding can release Lorraine after the fluctuations of the centuries from the tragic spell of being a borderland, a spell which has paralyzed and isolated its rich gifts. In the European spirit of tomorrow there is no place for the petty national jealousies of yesterday.

SWITZERLAND—ISLAND OF NEUTRALITY

By Georg Bräutigam

IT is a curious experience nowadays to travel in a wide arc through three European countries which have all managed to keep themselves out of actual warfare. Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland: what possibilities of comparison are

offered merely by the fact of having, within a short period of time, seen the streets of Lisbon, the avenues of Madrid, and the side roads and squares of the city of Bern.

In the train I read one of the sparkling essays of the Spanish philosopher Ortega y

Gasset. He had called it "Arcades and Rain," and he philosophized about that golden age of Spain when the great squares were built with their surrounding arcades, a noble and costly employment of covered colonnades to make the town pleasant, to enable one to go for a walk and triumph over the rain.

This Spanish essay provides me with a convenient bridge from Madrid to Bern. For here, too, I am walking through the long, branched arcades of the Swiss capital. They are lower than the arcades lauded by Ortega, more compact and prosaic. Firmly founded on broad square bases, with the air of solid citizens, the colonnades of Bern allow a clear view through their arches of the many old fountains crowned by armored heroes of the city's past. Here the covered ways open onto a market. As neat and colorful as if they were taken from a box of toys, one stall stands next to the other, with vegetables and fruit carefully arranged on clean leaves. Walking about among the market women and farmers, one's eye is attracted by the colors and one's nose appreciates the homelike smells after the symphonies of odors of the Iberian Peninsula. Here there is a smell of apples, herbs, wild flowers, onions, chives, and grapes, and of the moist foliage of autumn forests. And the citizens of Bern unhurriedly go about their business.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN WAR

Nothing seems to change here. The Swiss precision watch, a national product known throughout the world, might well have served as a model for the war organization of the country. At least, that is the impression given by the way in which the organization is run, supported as it is by a planning which was prepared to come into force from the first day of war and to count upon existing reserves. Having recently seen dissatisfied people demanding food in the streets of Lisbon, having recently heard in Madrid about difficulties to be explained by geographical factors and by Spain's convalescence from her civil war,

we now stand here in Bern und see daily life go on unchanged as in the first days of war. This was not possible without a certain amount of totalitarianism which, however, wisely emphasized its "war duration." In this way, the domestic situation was well balanced.

It is true that, influenced by the planned Anglo-American sellout of Europe to Bolshevism, Communist agitation has tried to gain more ground in Switzerland. The head of the Swiss Communist Party, Léon Nicole of Geneva, has proposed to the Swiss Social-Democratic Party that he and his followers enter its ranks to form a united front after the pattern of the one-time French Popular Front. The decision of the Social-Democratic Congress in Winterthur, which was awaited with interest, rejected this proposal. Nicole—whose party was prohibited in Switzerland and who was himself excluded from the Swiss Parliament—was recently arrested again for the purpose of political investigation. He applied for an amnesty for himself and his followers. The State Council refused this amnesty with 112 votes to 2.

"ABSOLUTE NEUTRALITY"

In former times, Switzerland had always insisted on complete repudiation of Bolshevism. Nevertheless, there have often been circles—by no means least of all among the upper classes—who have flirted, if not with Communism, at least with Soviet "culture"; and now there is a flirting with the so-called "new" Soviet policy. The Government shows a far more reserved attitude.

The Swiss acutely feel the increasing tension of the world's political and military situation. The war is getting closer again; Anglo-American bombs have fallen on Swiss mountain villages; and American planes, damaged in air battles over Germany and Italy, crash or make forced landings on Swiss soil. With increasing frequency the Helvetian skies are being violated. Switzerland feels that the time has come once again to emphasize her attitude of neutrality. Events such as England's blackmailing deal with

Portugal over the Azores provide a very topical background for Swiss declarations of this kind. The best guarantee for the maintenance of this absolute neutrality is considered to be the utmost in defense-preparation measures. The sacrifices made for these are revealed by the mobilization costs, which now amount to more than five billion francs and have still to be covered.

In spite of the natural preponderance of present-day worries, the Swiss are already thinking of the period to come after the war. In this respect, one would expect Switzerland to prefer to be a member of a European community in which the small states take their place according to their task in Europe rather than to be put aside by a bloc of great powers to form an insignificant potpourri with other small states, only to have an occasional say to pad the program in the concert of the powers. The Swiss have paid particular attention to the complaints of the Dutch Exile Government to the effect that, in contradiction to the originally proclaimed war aims of the Democracies, the latter long seem to have ceased caring about the fate of the small states. Meanwhile, developments in Eastern Europe have shown the ideas Moscow has about the future of the small states and that the Anglo-Americans countenance these ideas. A Europe yielded up to Soviet influence would hardly correspond to Helvetian taste.

The difficulties with which this encircled country has to contend demand a domestic concentration which naturally leads to the power and controlling position of the Government authorities in Bern making themselves felt more and more strongly. Consequently, it is already being claimed that the liberty of the individual has almost disappeared and that future responsibilities will be entirely in the hands of the collective organization, all of which is commented upon

somewhat gloomily as being the "twilight of the Helvetian bourgeois era."

For the time being, however, the Swiss are intent upon holding out, and here private initiative has ample room to prove its worth. They are fully aware of the fact that their country can only continue to exist in a highly civilized Europe which is able to send tourists for the Swiss hotel industry and which requires the goods of the Swiss luxury and precision industries. Efforts are being made to maintain the hotels as far as possible by means of domestic tourist travel. Training of hotel personnel is still being carried on in order to keep this Swiss specialty going until better days return. Everything is being done to provide variety of life in the various cantons: national sports weeks are organized; the well-known fair of Lugano calls the people to colorful Tessin; Bern, the patrician town with its rural environment, has organized "days of the horse" in the national military horse depot; in Wallis the wine harvest is an excuse for wine festivals, followed by music weeks and art exhibitions; Lausanne also has a fair; and Geneva has exhibitions of masterpieces of Switzerland's two best-known industries and crafts—watches and jewelry.

Along the lakeside promenades of Geneva, the flowers bloom till the first storms of winter; music sounds from the cafés beside the lake, which are filled with well-dressed people; and an admiring crowd walks up and down in front of the stands on which the works of watch-makers, goldsmiths, jewelers, and enamel artists are exhibited on silk cushions. In the city, where three or more languages mingle, there is an atmosphere of undisturbed peace. But who knows? Perhaps the time may come again, as during the first few days of the Western campaign in 1940, when posters with orders of mobilization again appear on the walls of Swiss towns and villages to defend this island of neutrality.